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NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

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American Gas Association

Community Services Administration

National Community Action Agency
Executive Director's Association

CSA 1.2:

"I can point the way, Congress can enact laws, government can execute programs, but true success can only come from the commitment of the people of the United States. Your concerns, your sacrifices, your values, your participation, will determine the future life of a nation that we will love."

President Jimmy Carter

July 17, 1979

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Introduction

Statement of the Problem

America is working to more effectively use its domestic energy supplies and other natural resources -- while at the same time reducing its dependence upon the energy resources of other nations. Under any circumstances, the achievement of these goals would be difficult. However, this difficulty is being greatly multiplied by the devastating effects of inflation. During the next twenty-five years, resolution of the energy issue will probably have a more profound effect on our economy, our government, and our lives than any other single factor. The new realities of supply imbalance, third world needs, and spiralling costs call into question the basic assumptions that underlie many of our most important habits, values, aspirations and public policies.

It is acknowledged that an efficient society, which carefully uses its physical resources and facilitates development of all its human resources, is one which has the best chance of achieving social equity and access to economic opportunities for all of its citizens.

Our nation's energy goals must not then be pursued without addressing closely related pressing human needs. Americans living in poverty are bearing the heaviest burdens from higher energy prices, and they are the least able to bear those burdens. Millions of poor people, and particularly the elderly, are no longer able to afford essential energy.

A large majority of the dwellings of low-income families are inefficiently designed with little or no insulation and are in need of improvements which will stop air infiltration. In addition, most heating equipment in these dwellings are energy inefficient.

As prices continue to increase, the situation continues to worsen. The problem is one of examining how the poor can have access to energy services without significantly increasing tax burdens and/or cost to other consumers, while still encouraging more efficient energy use.

The problems cannot be solved by any one group in our country -- nor by any one sector -- be it public or private. Rather, they require the concern, sacrifice and participation of all segments of our society.

Only through the cooperation and joining together of the people in America can we be assured of the availability of natural resources to meet our needs in years to come, and of energy independence from other nations.

AMERICAN GAS ASSOCIATION

The American Gas Association (A.G.A.) and its member companies have for many years played a leading role within the energy industry in working to improve the ability of the poor and elderly to secure essential energy services. The A.G.A. was a pioneering advocate for the passage of the Energy Assistance Act which reduced the impact of rising utility bills on the poor and elderly. Many of its member companies sponsor company-funded consumer assistance programs and programs to help the poor budget their utility payments; many are providing a variety of home energy audit programs to homeowners; and many already engage in gas company-assisted efforts to install and finance conservation systems.

The Weatherization Training Program implemented by InterNorth, Inc., of Omaha, Nebraska (formerly Northern Natural Gas Company), is an example of an exceptional joint effort between local utilities, Community Action and CETA agencies. The program designed and developed by InterNorth, Inc. provides job training for unemployed youth and other CETA-eligibles in weatherizing homes and

conducting energy audits. During the eight week course, the students are taught basic skills in the use of tools and materials and utilize their training in homes selected by local community action agencies.

This ongoing program is resulting in increasing energy efficiency of residential dwellings, and the availability of natural gas for other markets. In addition, many graduates of the training program have secured permanent employment with the assistance of InterNorth, Inc.

A.G.A. believes that it is in the best interest of the energy industries to become involved in these activities. As a responsible member of society, this association and the companies it represents are committed to taking a leadership role in solving critical consumer energy problems within the private sector. A.G.A. and its member companies have the expertise to aid social agencies in this area of concern.

COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

The Community Services Administration (C.S.A.) was the first federal agency to embark on a course of action to deal with the energy shortage as a national problem. It did so under the broad language of Section 221 (a) (5) of the Economic Opportunity Act. This legislation gives C.S.A. the authority and the flexibility to provide federal coordination for comprehensive local programs of energy conservation assistance.

The primary vehicle for carrying out its energy programs is C.S.A.'s network of more than 900 Community Action Agencies (CAAs), Community Development Corporations, and related community-based groups. CAAs are located in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Trust Territories. Community action is -- as the name implies -- a community marshalling its own abilities, tapping resources available at all levels, and utilizing professionals and volunteers to solve the problems of its own low-income citizens.

CAAs are locally established organizations -- either primate organizations designated by the local governing body, or departments within local governments. CAA

activities are determined by boards of directors which, by law, must represent all segments of the community: locally elected officials or their designess; members of private groups (such as churches, business, labor, social service agencies, etc.); and at least one-third of the members of each board must be representatives of the poor.

All CAAs have Energy Projects, and local Energy Project Advisory Committees, which are constituted in such a way as to assure broad community representation. CAAs have nearly fifteen years' experience in coordinating at the local level a broad range of federal programs in the provision of a wide range of essential services to the poor. CAA energy programs were a result of the 1973 national energy crisis. As costs of energy sources soared, the ability of poverty-stricken persons to afford such services declined. C.S.A. responded to an escalating emergency by originating and following through on a comprehensive, coordinated, agency-wide attack on the problems of the poor created or aggravated by this new and continuing crisis.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION

The National Community Action Agency Executive Director's Association (NCAAEDA) represents 406 Community Action Agencies in all regions of the country. The Association has a national staff located in Washington, D.C. The NCAAEDA Board of Directors is elected by the membership, and consists of its officers, representatives from each of the ten federal regions, and the National Association of CAA Boards.

NCAAEDA and its Energy Committee have taken a leadership role in providing a local perspective to national deliberations surrounding energy issues affecting low-income people. NCAAEDA has developed analyses of the various legislative initiatives which provide governmental low-income assistance, and has worked with both the public and private sectors in attempts to assure that national efforts are more responsive to the problems actually experienced by communities in attempting to solve energy inequities.

NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

NATIONAL PROGRAM

A mechanism was needed through which heretofore divergent interests could be brought together for the purpose of applying their differing resources to stimulate equitable alternatives to the energy-related problems of the poor, elderly and disadvantaged. In a cooperative effort, A.G.A., C.S.A., and NCAAEDA entered into discussions which led to a partnership -- which we wish to encourage others to join -- to bring about a National Energy Conservation Partnership Program. This program would create stronger ties and open lines of communication betweeen federal agencies and members of the energy industry at the national level, and would seek to stimulate similar partnerships at the local level between the energy industry, C.S.A. grantees, and a wide range of other interests including elected officials.

The purpose of this program is to:

-- bring together major elements in the community to address the problems of energy self-sufficiency for low-income and disadvantaged persons, with job training, future employment for the unemployed and

underemployed labor force, and the furthering of energy-related enterprise development as major elements of the effort.

-- explore the alternatives available to the poor and elderly and those groups which advocate on their behalf, to enable them to participate in the Nation's search for solutions to the energy dilemma.

GOALS

The resources of A.G.A., C.S.A., NCAAEDA, and the Community Action network, will be utilized in pursuit of the following goals:

1. Opening lines of communication between the energy industry and CAAs, as well as other segments of the community;
2. Using to the fullest advantage existing networks of energy suppliers, distributors, CAAs and others, as the providers or conduits of assistance;
3. Stimulating local initiatives in addressing the problems of energy conservation;
4. Encouraging the exchange of information, nationally and locally, in order that collective experience and maximum use of existing resources can be brought to bear on energy-related existing problems;
5. Expansion of energy conservation efforts, including reduction of America's reliance upon foreign resources;
6. Increasing opportunities for the poor to become more self-reliant and less dependent on government

assistance;

7. Enabling the poor and other citizens to participate creatively in the nation's search for solutions to the energy dilemma in such a way as to foster optimal coupling of local initiatives with specialized expertise; and
8. Encouraging employment and training opportunities in energy-related occupations.

OBJECTIVES*

--Formation of partnerships among local utilities, CAAs, other community based organizations, and local elected officials for energy planning and information exchange;

--To establish a national information exchange for the dissemination of program information;

--Skills training for the underemployed and unemployed, including minorities and females, in energy-related occupations;

--Identification, through energy audits, of residential dwellings in need of weatherization;

--Weatherization of residential dwellings of the poor and elderly;

--Identification of job opportunities in the private sector for program graduates; and

--Consumer education and other assistance to the poor and elderly.

* The efforts of A.G.A., C.S.A. and NCAAEDA in putting together this program are based, to a large, extent, on the Weatherization Training Program implemented by InterNorth, Inc. Copies of the prospectus for the InterNorth Program, and information on other programs currently in operation, will be made available to those interested through the Partnership Program.

PROJECTED OUTCOME OF THIS PROGRAM

The implementation of this program will result in:

-- an increased dialogue between utilities, representatives of the poor, elderly and unemployed, with increased understanding of the issues by all;

-- an increase in the efficient use of natural gas and other energy resources through conservation in residential dwellings;

-- an increase in awareness of alternative fuel and other energy sources and the uses of these sources in the immediate future;

-- an increase in present job opportunities and long-term employment for minorities, women, low-income and disadvantaged people in energy-related occupations;

-- an increase in the amount of financial and technical support given by the private sector to CAAs;

-- an increase in energy availability through the reduction of dependency on foreign energy; and

-- an increase in the cooperation between industry, CAAs, and energy consumers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

This program has been designed by an Advisory Group composed of representatives from A.G.A., C.S.A., and NCAAEDA. The Advisory Group will continue to provide program guidance, and will actively seek the participation of others in this effort.

A series of regional seminars will be conducted in early Fall to bring together members of the energy industry, CAAs, and other segments of communities across the country, including persons presently involved in related efforts. The seminars will be an initial step in opening lines of communication between the energy industry and community organizations at the local level, and will provide the opportunity to maximize the benefits of experience by those groups already involved in energy conservation efforts.

A national clearinghouse for information exchange will be established to facilitate the dissemination of program information. Office space and phone service will be made available by A.G.A. with clerical and other support being

contributed by A.G.A., C.S.A. and NCAAEDA. Forthcoming developments and details on the program will be made available through the various publications distributed by the three organizations.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

The undersigned do hereby express their intention to provide mutual support to the full development and implementation of the National Energy Conservation Partnership Program.

George Lawrence, President
American Gas Association

Richard Rios, Director
Community Services Administration

for Edward Becks, President
National Community Action Agency
Executive Director's Association

August 21, 1980

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